

# Judy Wexler

## Bio

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...to merit being called a jazz singer you have to have something to say-your own story-as it moves you then and there." .... Nat Hentoff

Judy Wexler is a natural storyteller, with a distinctive voice full of shadings. She knows how to dig into a song and find its essence. She is also "one of the most focused, unpretentious, no-nonsense, bop-oriented jazz singers around" (JazzTimes), with an "instinctive ability to bring out the best in each song, often taking it into unfamiliar territory." (All Music Guide)

Her 2005 debut, *Easy on the Heart*, made radio waves and introduced her to a wide jazz audience. *Dreams & Shadows*, her 2008 follow-up, debuted at #2 on the national JazzWeek chart and confirmed her ability to find great songs and effortlessly bring them to life. Judy was interviewed on NPR Weekend Edition with Susan Stamberg, who said, "From the evidence on her new second album, *Dreams & Shadows*, Judy Wexler can sing almost anything." Judy is thrilled to present her newest musical offering on the Jazzed Media label. *Under a Painted Sky* marries Judy's expressive storytelling and out-of-the-box song selections with the richly harmonic arrangements of pianist Alan Pasqua. Her most personal and compelling release to date, John Gilbert of Jazzreview.com raves, "This recording should be in the true Jazzophiles collection — it gets no better!"

A Los Angeles native, Judy always had music in her life. Her father, a music lover who constantly played recordings by Ella, Frank, and Sarah, as well as classical music, started her on piano lessons at the age of five. She loved performing, and played piano, sang, and acted in musicals in high school. In college at UC Santa Cruz, she focused on theater and classical piano.

After college, she moved to San Francisco, where she worked in theater and met her future husband. He was a huge jazz fan, and together they frequented the renowned Keystone Korner, which was just down the hill from their North Beach apartment. Between her husband's vast record collection and the legendary jazz artists they heard at Keystone, Judy became hooked. As Judy says, "it drew me in then and never let go."

A few years later, the couple moved to Los Angeles. Judy continued performing in theater and television, and guest-starred on the comedy hit *Frasier*. She decided to indulge her passion for jazz by studying at Dick Grove Music School. She took jazz piano courses and all of Grove's jazz harmony classes. She studied jazz piano privately with Terry Trotter and jazz singing with some great L.A. teachers, like Sue Raney, Tamir Hendelman, and Tom Garvin, and began gigging. A few years of increased exposure on the L.A. scene earned her a reputation for the craftsmanship and emotional immediacy of her singing, while displaying her knack for compiling a spirited, cliché-free repertoire.

Judy's passion for singing has taken her around the world. She has sung at the jazz festivals of Montreal, Tel Aviv, Dubai, San Jose, and Temecula, where she opened the show for Mose Allison. She has headlined at such noted clubs as the Blue Note, Kitano, and Feinstein's in New York, Jazz Alley in Seattle, Blues Alley in Washington, D.C., Catalina Jazz Club in Los

Angeles, the Cellar in Vancouver, and Nardis Jazz Club in Istanbul.

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